



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

T - 32 - 06
For Immediate Release
Friday, June 30, 2006

Contact: Carol Singleton
916.255.6578
Ron Baker
916.324.3142

DTSC settlement will boost State Fire Marshal's efforts to manage illegal fireworks

SACRAMENTO – Citing the Department's commitment to strict enforcement of the state's environmental laws, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Director Maureen Gorsen announced a \$1.5 million settlement with MP Associates, Inc. (MPA) of Amador County, which will require the pyrotechnic manufacturer to build four mobile thermal treatment units, reinforced containment chambers specifically designed for the destruction of explosives, for the State Fire Marshal within 18 months.

"The Fourth of July is not usually a time for celebration for the State Fire Marshal. With illegal fireworks causing serious and sometimes fatal injuries throughout the state each year, we need to use the best available technologies to destroy these seized fireworks," said Gorsen. "Providing a safe and efficient method of disposal of these devices protects public health the environment and decreases the risk of fire. This settlement is encouraging news. Last year (2005), the State Fire Marshal confiscated over 200,000 pounds of illegal fireworks," she added.

The settlement stems from hazardous waste management violations that DTSC noted during an inspection of MPA in September 2002 at its 300-acre facility in Amador County. MPA produces pyrotechnic devices and fireworks for the entertainment and special effects industries and the military.

"These mobile thermal treatment units are invaluable tools in managing and disposing of illegal fireworks," said State Fire Marshal and Director of the Department of Forestry Ruben Grijalva. "This new treatment technology will improve the State Fire Marshal's ability to protect the public from the danger associated with these explosive devices," added Grijalva.

The violations include the following:

- Treatment of hazardous waste without a permit
- Disposal of hazardous waste without a permit
- Failure to maintain and operate facility to prevent or minimize the release of hazardous waste into the environment.
- Failure to properly label hazardous waste containers
- Failure to train employees in hazardous waste management procedures
- Failure to make hazardous waste determinations for waste streams.

- - - M O R E - - -

News Release

DTSC settlement will boost State Fire Marshal's efforts to manage illegal fireworks

Friday, June 30, 2006

Page 2

These unsafe and illegal practices resulted in the release of perchlorate, lead, copper, antimony, dioxins and polyaromatic hydrocarbons into the air, soil and groundwater.

In March 2003, DTSC issued an imminent and substantial endangerment determination against the company and ordered a cleanup of soil and groundwater contamination. MPA signed the consent order and agreed to conduct the cleanup. The pyrotechnic manufacturer denied any wrongdoing but wished to avoid prolonged litigation.

Under the terms of the settlement, DTSC will allow MPA to meet their payment obligation by building four mobile thermal treatment units for the State Fire Marshal. The units must comply with state air quality standards. MPA is required to provide maintenance for the units for five years.

For more information or to view the consent order, visit www.dtsc.ca.gov.

#

The Department of Toxic Substances Control is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.